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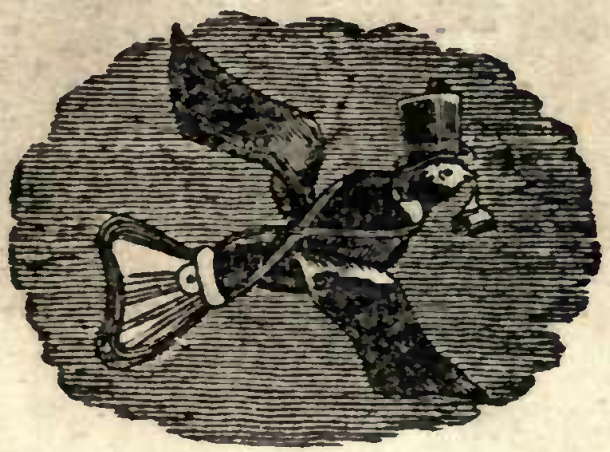
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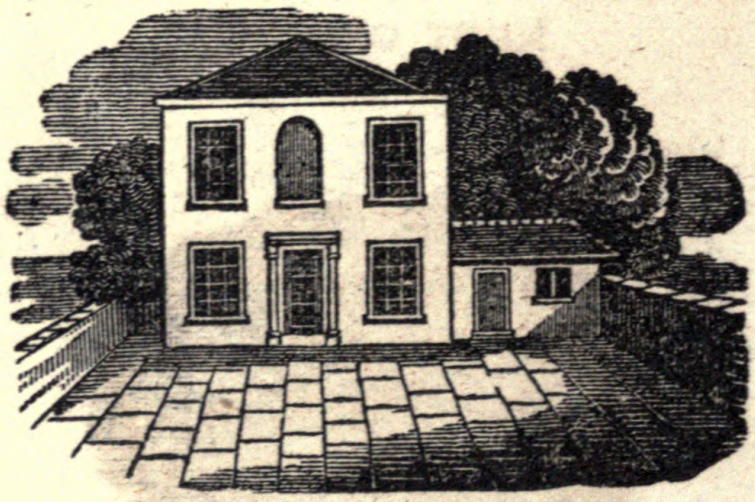
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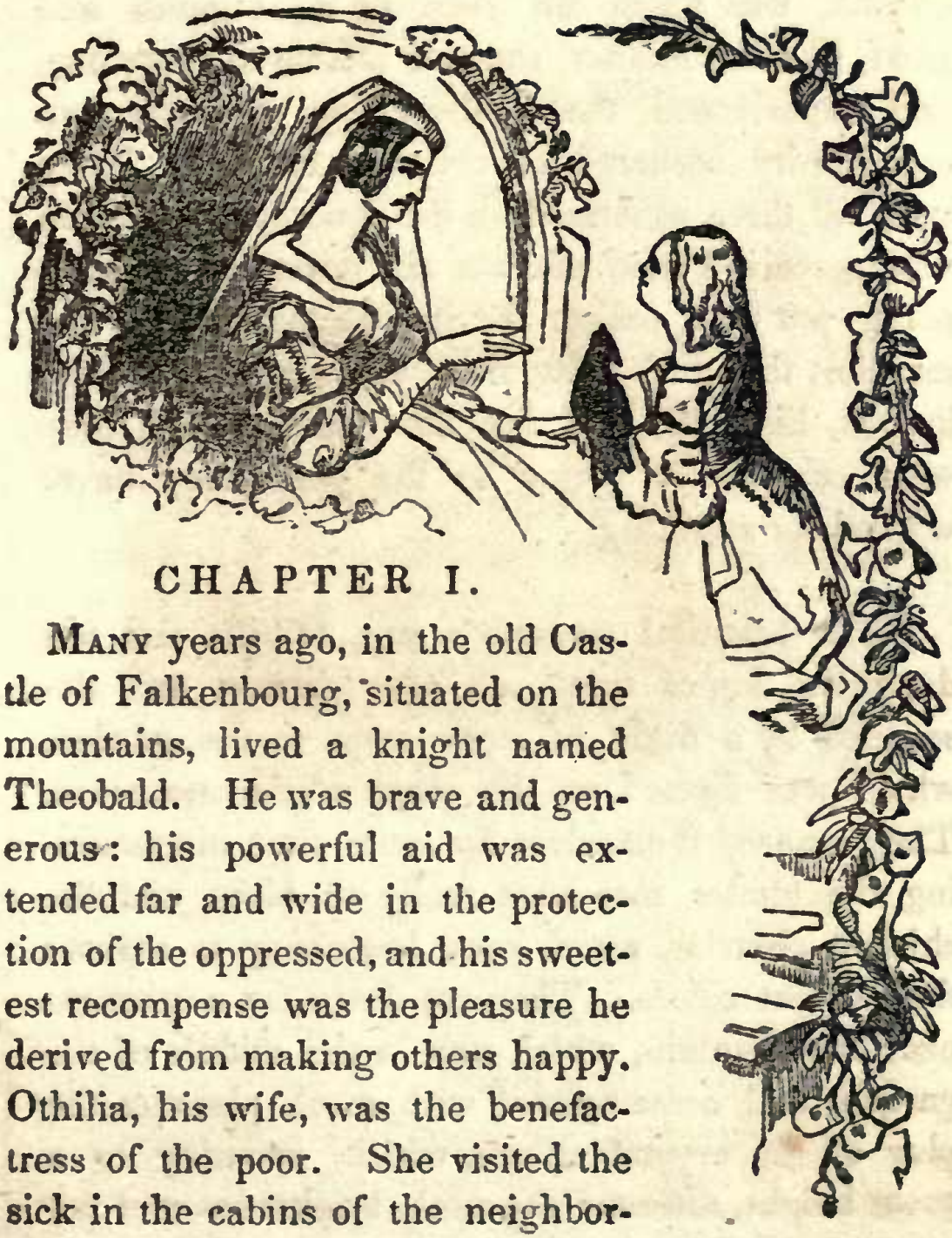
THE REWARDS OF VIRTUE AND THE PUNISHMENT OF VICE.



SELECTED BY MRS. COLMAN.

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CHAPTER I.

MANY years ago, in the old Castle of Falkenbourg, situated on the mountains, lived a knight named Theobald. He was brave and generous: his powerful aid was extended far and wide in the protection of the oppressed, and his sweetest recompense was the pleasure he derived from making others happy. Othilia, his wife, was the benefactress of the poor. She visited the sick in the cabins of the neighboring valleys, she lavished on them

every comfort and attention, and the unfortunate who deserved assistance found an asylum in her castle. Agnes, only daughter of Theobald and Othilia, was about ten years of age: gentle and good, like her mother, she was affable to every one, and experienced the liveliest joy whenever an opportunity occurred of obliging another. They were all three venerated in the country; and those who perceived from afar the tall towers of Falkenbourg, put up a prayer for its inhabitants. It was manifest that a blessing from above reposed on the knight, his wife, and daughter; and though they were continually giving to the poor, they never wanted for anything.

On a beautiful summer's day, Othilia and her daughter Agnes went out after dinner, and descended by a flight of stone steps to the garden, which was formed on the slope of the mountain. They amused themselves for some time in examining the tender rose-buds ready to blow, and the shining cherries, which were beginning to assume their bright colors. They sat down for a moment near the fountain, which was in the middle of the garden, and contemplated with much pleasure the play of the crystal waters, which, spouting to a great height, reflected the sun's brightness, and fell again in a thin shower, in the midst of which a small rainbow was formed.

All was still in the garden; nothing was heard but the warbling of a linnet perched on a neighboring tree, whose melodious voice mingled agreeably with the soft murmuring of the fountain. Suddenly they heard something fly rapidly into the arbor in which they were seated, but for a moment could not discover what it was. Both frightened, they involuntarily looked at each other, when immediately a large bird descended near them with extended wings, which, on perceiving Agnes and her mother, flew away as quickly as it came.

Agnes was agitated, and dared not look around her; but her mother said to her with a smile: "Do not be alarmed, it is probably a poor little bird flying from the pursuit of a hawk."

At length Agnes took courage, and got up to look among the grass, when she soon discovered what had so much alarmed her. "Ah, mother!' she cried, "look! it is a snow-white dove."

Othilia took the bird, and said to her daughter whilst she looked at her with a scrutinizing glance "I will have it roasted for you this evening."

"Roast it!" cried the kind Agnes, with painful astonishment, whilst she caught hold of the little dove, as if to snatch it from the jaws of death. "Oh, no! surely, my dear mother, you do not speak seriously. This poor little animal sought refuge near me: how could I kill it? Look. how

beautiful it is! It is as white as snow; and its feet as red as coral. Ah! how its heart beats! Poor little dove! It looks at me as if supplicating my pity; and her innocent eye seems to say, 'Do not hurt me.' No, dear little bird, I will *not* hurt you. It is not in vain that you have sought my protection; I will make you happy with me."

"Very well, my child," then said her mother; "you have guessed my thoughts; I wished only to try you. Carry the dove to your chamber, and give it food. We should never repulse the unfortunate, nor refuse our assistance to such as demand it; even though it be a dumb animal."

Othilia ordered a little dove-cote to be made of red and green trellis-work. Agnes had it placed in a corner of her room, and the dove soon seemed at home in it. She gave it its daily food in abundance, and from time to time renewed the sand in the bottom of its cage.

The dove was soon accustomed to its young mistress, and became quite familiar with her. As soon as she opened the door of its cage, it would come and peck the seeds she presented to it from her hand, and soon there was no occasion even to close it. At day-break, when Agnes was still sound asleep, it would fly on her bed to awaken her, nor would it allow her any rest till she rose and gave it something to eat. In a moment of impatience, she

complained of it to her mother: "I shall know," she said, "how to prevent my sleep being disturbed again. In future, I will take care to bolt the little door of the cage, so that it cannot get out in the morning." "No, my dear," replied her mother, "it is better that you should learn from the dove to rise early in the morning. This is a habit which contributes to health, and disposes the soul to enjoyment for the whole day. Would it not be a shame if you were more slothful than a dove?" Agnes took advantage of this lesson, and rose early.

She was conversing one day, sitting near the open window; the dove was picking up some crumbs upon the ground, when it suddenly flew away, and perched on an adjoining roof. Agnes, much frightened, screamed out. Her mother ran and asked what had happened. "Oh! my dove;" answered the little girl, weeping, and showing the roof on which the bird was walking in the sun. "Call it!" said her mother. Agnes did so, and the dove flew immediately and alighted on her hand. Agnes was astonished at its obedience; but her mother said to her: "Henceforward be as obedient to your parents as the dove is to you; their joy will be much greater than that which you now experience. Will you not please me in this, my dear child?" Agnes promised, and kept her word; from that time she was more obedient than ever.

One day she had been watering the plants and flowers in the garden; tired with her work, she sat down near her mother, on a grassy seat, opposite the fountain. The dove was so tame, that she allowed it to fly about at liberty; it came to drink at the fountain. "Do you see, mamma," said Agnes, "with what precaution she steps from one stone to another, to avoid the mud? she is so clean, the dear little dove! one cannot see the least speck on her dazzling white feathers." "My Agnes is sometimes less attentive to cleanliness," answered her mother, pointing to her daughter's white dress. In fact, Agnes had been drawing water from the fountain with the watering-pot, and had soiled her dress through inadvertence. She blushed, and became more careful: thenceforward, her white dresses were like the newly-fallen snow.

Some time after, Agnes accompanied her mother on a little excursion, which she enjoyed very much. At her return, the little dove came to meet her, and evinced the greatest joy. "During your absence," said the maid, "she has been quite unhappy; she sought you everywhere. It is wonderful to see an animal destitute of reason recognize her benefactress, and show such attachment to her." "It is true," replied Agnes, "she could not be more grateful for the little food I give every day." "But you, my child," said her mother, "are you always grate-

ful? You have many pleasures; do you fervently thank God for them? Do not suffer this little animal to make you blush, by showing herself superior to you." Agnes, in truth, had not been careful enough to give God thanks for the benefits and pleasures which He showered upon her; but from this time she observed her duty in this respect more perfectly.

"My pretty dove!" said Agnes one day to the little bird, which had been seated all the morning on a corner of the table, and looked at its mistress with eyes full of tenderness; "how many lessons you have taught me; how much I owe you!" Othilia replied: "You may still learn another from her, my dear Agnes, and it is the most important of all: this dove, of so pure a white, is a sweet and lovely image of Christian purity. She is harmless, without guile, without hypocrisy, without disguise, and JESUS expressed all this in a few words, when he said, 'Be ye harmless as doves.' Oh! my dear Agnes, let this noble simplicity be ever your portion! let not dissimulation, falsehood, or hypocrisy, ever approach your heart! God grant that we may always be able to say of you, Agnes is innocent and harmless as a dove!"

The prayer of Othilia was heard, for Agnes grew up in simplicity and innocence.

CHAPTER II

THE RESCUE.

A NUMEROUS band of robbers, at this period, spread terror and consternation through the country. Sir Theobald pursued them to the mountains with his followers, and returned to his castle. Satisfied with the fortunate termination of the expedition, he sat down to take some refreshment, and began to relate how he had made several of the robbers prisoners, dispersed the others, and reëstablished security in the neighborhood. Othilia and Agnes took their spinning-wheels, and listened with attention.

It was rather late, and the candles were already lighted, when a lady, dressed in black, her cheeks wan and pale, entered the room, leading a little girl by the hand, dressed also in mourning. The knight, his wife, and daughter, rose to salute the stranger.

She advanced towards Sir Theobald, and, weeping, said to him: "God preserve you, most generous knight! Though I have never seen you, I come to ask of you an asylum. I am Rosalind of Hohenbourg, and this child is my daughter Emma. You are perhaps acquainted with the cause of my affliction. My husband, the good Adalrich, is dead

of the wounds which he received in the war. You knew him, that excellent man, who did so much good to the unfortunate; he left us but a poor inheritance, and two covetous knights are trying to deprive us of the little that remains. One of them, under different pretexts, is trying to possess himself of the fertile fields which extend themselves to the castle walls; the other wishes to appropriate to himself the forests which belong to us. These two powerful and unjust neighbors have conspired against me; formerly the friends of my husband, they are become my most inveterate enemies. Adalrich foresaw it; and, when dying, he pronounced your name. 'Trust in God,' he said, 'and confide in Sir Theobald; nobody will then wrong you!' Generous knight, justify the dying words of my Adalrich. Alas! what will become of me if they deprive me of all I possess; if nothing is left me but the walls of my castle? How shall I subsist with my Emma?"

The little Emma, who was about the same age as Agnes, also approached the knight, and said with tears, "Generous knight, be to me a father, and do not send me away."

Sir Theobald stood erect, with a grave and silent look, his hand supporting his chin, and his eyes cast on the ground. Agnes said to him, while the tears ran down her cheeks, "My dear father, take pity

on them, I implore you. Do you recollect when my dove, pursued by a bird of prey, sought my protection, how my mother said, we should never repulse the unfortunate who seek an asylum with us; and how she rejoiced that I had taken pity on the poor little thing? These unhappy strangers are more deserving of pity and compassion than a dove."

Sir Theobald with emotion replied, "Be content, my Agnes; with the help of God, I will defend them. If I was silent, I was but reflecting on the best means of aiding them in this emergency." Saying these words, the knight presented a seat to Rosalind; Emma sat down at the side of Agnes, and Othilia left the room to order the supper.

After having further inquired into the causes which had made Rosalind's enemies treat her in so ungenerous a manner, he promised that he would employ himself on her account the very next morning, and prayed her to await his return to the castle. Rosalind thanked him for his hospitable reception, with tears of gratitude. At day-break, Sir Theobald and his followers departed.

Agnes was delighted that Emma was going to stay a few days with her; she conducted her to her room, and then to the garden, showed her her wardrobe, her flowers, and her dove. The two amiable children were soon bound to each other by

the tenderest friendship; for both one and the other were endued with fine feelings, and education had farther developed the good qualities of their hearts. Sir Theobald returned four or five days after. "Good news," cried he; "your enemies have desisted from their unjust pretensions, and the quarrel is terminated. They would have paid little attention to my words if I had not had recourse to menaces; but I ended by declaring to them that I would make war against whoever should have the audacity to injure you, and they have consented to leave you at rest. Console yourself, noble lady; those who conspired to ruin you will not reap your fields, neither shall a stranger hunt in your forests, nor lift an axe against them."

Rosalind, with gratitude and joy, knew not how to thank her deliverer. "May God reward you, who protect the unhappy widow and orphan! May the blessing of the Lord be with your family!"

At length, the moment of departure arrived, and the lady made her preparations for returning to Hohenbourg. The two little girls, when taking leave of each other, melted into tears. Agnes wished to present a keepsake to her young friend. Emma had frequently expressed a desire to possess a dove as tame as hers; she, therefore, went and brought the beautiful bird, and having first pressed it against her tearful cheeks, she presented it to her

friend, Emma hesitated to accept it; a friendly dispute was the result, which ended by Emma's yielding the point. Agnes gave her also the pretty cage, and recommended the dove to her care as one would recommend a dear child when confiding it to the care of strangers.

However, after Emma's departure, Agnes almost repented of giving away her bird, which she regretted having no longer near her. "I ought rather," she said to her mother, "to have made her a present of my ear-rings." "You can do so another time, my dear Agnes, when Emma comes to see you; at this time you could not have given anything so acceptable to your little friend. A more costly keepsake would not have given her equal pleasure, and might have hurt her delicacy. An object so precious as it was to you, though of little real value, proved that you love her. Do not repent of what you have done; you see how your kind father was ready to sacrifice his life in behalf of the oppressed widow. It is kind on your part, also, to have given what you love best to cheer the unhappy orphan. Those who do not early learn to deny themselves and to sacrifice to others what they themselves possess, do not truly love them. Such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

CHAPTER III

THE PLOT.

ROSALIND, contented and happy, resided with her daughter Emma within the walls of her old castle, situated on the slope of the mountains. One evening, at a late hour, two strangers appeared at the castle gate and demanded hospitality. Their clothing was of a dark brown, like that of pilgrims; they carried heavy staffs in their hands, and their hats were ornamented with cockle-shells. The porter announced them. Rosalind ordered them to be conducted to the chamber on the ground floor, and gave orders to have them served with supper.

When they had finished their repast, she descended with Emma to see them. The pilgrims began to relate many interesting anecdotes about the Holy Land, to which all the people of the castle listened with attention; little Emma in particular found the greatest pleasure in hearing their marvellous stories. The tears ran down her cheeks; for her youthful heart swelled with the pious desire of seeing those distant countries, the birth-place of the Saviour of men. "My dear Emma," said her mother, "we may always transport ourselves to that country; we may visit the Mount of Olives, Mount

Calvary, and the Holy Sepulchre. We have but to read the Holy Gospels with attention; there we may follow the Lord step by step in His path of beneficence; we shall hear His own words, see Him suffer, see Him also die, and rise from the dead. If we retain in our hearts the recollection of His doctrine and sufferings; if, above all, we follow His example, we also shall live in the Holy Land. Yes, it is thus that all the earth may be sanctified by us!"

The pilgrims desired to be informed about the Castle of Falkenbourg, and spoke in terms of the highest praise of Sir Theobald. "If his castle were not so very distant," said the oldest of the two, "and if I could hope to meet this brave knight, I would willingly go out of my way to see him." Rosalind assured him that the road he was going to take passed close to Falkenbourg.

The pilgrims appeared delighted, and resolved to depart next morning to go there. Emma and her mother charged them with a thousand friendly salutations for Sir Theobald, Othilia, and Agnes. Emma presented each with a piece of money which she had received from her mother, and prayed them to tell Agnes that the dove was well.

Rosalind gave orders to one of her domestics to show the pilgrims the shortest way, which was across the mountains, and at day-break they left,

accompanied by their guide. The young lad followed them merrily, and offered good-naturedly to carry their staves.

The pilgrims took little notice of him, but walked on silently for some time. At length, when they had climbed a steep mountain, the path became less difficult, and they commenced a conversation in Italian. The young man who accompanied them was originally from Italy; he was called at the castle, the little Lienhardt, but his real name was Leonardo; he had been an orphan from his childhood, and Sir Adalrich had brought him to Germany to take charge of him, and although he knew German perfectly, he still recollected his native language.

He listened with great attention to the conversation of the two pilgrims, and was even going to testify to them his happiness on hearing his mother tongue spoken, when the subject of their discourse struck him with terror.

He discovered that they were not real pilgrims;—that they were only so in appearance, and that they were not so unacquainted with the country as they pretended to be; that they belonged in fact to the troop of robbers which Sir Theobald had dispersed; that they were burning to exercise their vengeance on him; and that for this purpose, under the disguise of pious pilgrims, they intended to introduce

themselves into the castle, and ask a night's lodging;—then to rise in the night and assassinate Sir Theobald, his wife and child, and all his people,—plunder the castle, and burn it to the ground.

When they perceived Falkenbourg in the distance, appearing between two blue mountains, the oldest of the two highwaymen, named Lupo, said to Orso, his accomplice: "There, there is the detested dwelling of the man who destroyed so many of our gang! he shall die in the most terrible torments; we will bind him hand and foot, and throw him alive into the flames of his castle." "The enterprise is rather a bold one," said Orso; "if we were to fail in our project, it might end badly with us. However, the treasures of the knight are worth the trouble of venturing such a hazardous attempt!" "To assassinate him," said Lupo, athirst for vengeance, "is what would give me greater pleasure than all his treasures; although I don't despise them. If we succeed, we shall be rich enough; we will renounce our trade, and choose a more tranquil kind of life. Listen, Orso, an excellent idea has struck me; we will dress ourselves in Sir Theobald's most magnificent clothes; you shall wear his gold chain, and I his knight's cross ornamented with precious stones; we will go into foreign countries, where they will take us for great lords, and we will lead a merry life with our

riches." "All that may be very well," replied Orso, "but I have fears for the success of our undertaking." "What! you are afraid!" said Lupo, "are not our plans well concerted? Have we not confederates in the country? As soon as we shall have lighted three candles and placed them in the window of the pilgrims' chamber, seven of the strongest and most able of our companions will come to our assistance; they will be expecting the signal, and we can introduce them into the castle; one of them is perfectly well acquainted with all the windings and all the vaults of the castle; when we shall be nine in number, we can easily overcome a few sleeping men. Make yourself easy, we shall certainly succeed."

The kind-hearted Leonardo was frozen with horror and affright at hearing the particulars of this dreadful conspiracy; but he showed no symptoms of understanding what they said. He followed them, now and then gathering flowers and whistling, whilst internally he heartily prayed that God would counteract the infamous design of these villains. He resolved, if possible, to accompany them to Falkenbourg, and to discover all to Sir Theobald.

Whilst the robbers were concerting their plans, the eldest made a false step, and was very nearly falling down a precipice, but was prevented by the

brambles. His pilgrim's dress was torn by the thorns, and Leonardo perceived that under his long brown robe, he wore a scarlet doublet and a cuirass of polished steel. At the same moment, Lupo dropped a poniard; but the guide pretended to have seen nothing. The elder villain hastily concealed the signs which had betrayed him; he fastened his robe carefully, whilst he looked with eyes as piercing as those of an eagle, at the terrified Leonardo.

The travellers soon arrived at the brink of a frightful abyss, at the bottom of which rushed a torrent, increased by the rain which had fallen during several days. Two rocks, covered with bushes, hung over the edge of the abyss, and a long and narrow fir-tree, which was only hewn on one side, had been thrown across the precipice, and served as a bridge to cross it. The old robber said to his companion in Italian: "This boy may possibly have seen my weapons; I 'll give him a push as we pass, so that he may tumble into this gulph; we shall then be in safety."

Poor Leonardo was in deadly agony; he stopped a few paces from the perilous bridge, and cried, in a terrified manner, "I dare not pass there; my head already swims!" But the elder robber replied, "Fear nothing, my boy! Come along, I 'll carry you." Saying these words, he advanced with open arms to seize hold of Leonardo; but he, continuing

to cry out, recoiled backwards, desirous to rush into the neighboring forest, for the robber was very near catching him. "Ah!" cried the poor youth, trembling, "leave me alone, I entreat you! leave me alone; we might both fall in; and, even if I could get across in safety, how should I ever get back again? Let me return to the house; you are no longer in want of a guide; there is the path; you are not far from Falkenbourg."

The youngest of the two robbers attributed Leonardo's terror to nothing more than the fear which the sight of the precipice had caused him, and at which he himself shuddered. He said, in Italian, to his comrade, "I do not believe this fool has remarked anything; and even if he has seen your cuirass and poniard, he knows nothing of our language, and is ignorant of our plans; besides, who would believe his tales? Let the poor wretch go." "Oh! very well;" said the other; "but to be more secure, we 'll destroy the bridge, and then, even if he should guess our intentions, he could not prevent our succeeding. There is Falkenbourg; and, as there is not a bridge across the torrent for many miles round, it is impossible to give the slightest warning to Sir Theobald before we shall have executed our purpose.

The two robbers then took their staves, and allowed the youth to go on his way, without even

thanking him for his trouble. When they had crossed the abyss, Lupo recalled Leonardo, and cried out to him in German: "You were right, my friend; it is very dangerous to pass; this beam is quite rotten; one might easily be thrown in in passing. For fear of consequences, we will destroy this dangerous bridge; the country people will construct another." The robbers then detached the beam, which fell with a terrible crash, and the foaming waters carried it rapidly away. As soon as the pretended pilgrims had disappeared behind a rock, near which the road turned, Leonardo began to run with all his strength, to carry to Rosalind the fearful tidings of the conspiracy he had discovered.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WARNING.

The noble lady enjoyed the greatest tranquillity in the castle of Hohenbourg; she little thought of the danger that menaced her protector, the generous Sir Theobald. Emma talked of nothing but the delightful stories of the pilgrims, and, as she sat at work beside her mother, asked her a thousand questions about what she had been hearing. Towards evening, when the sun had become less pow-

erful, and the air more refreshing, they descended to the valley to visit their fields. The cornfields were magnificent, and promised an abundant harvest; wild poppies sparkled in the midst of the verdant country, and the fields of flax, covered with flowers of a beautiful blue, added further to the beauty of the scene. The happiness of Rosalind and her daughter was increased by the fact of their having been so nearly despoiled of these lands, over which Providence had scattered its gifts; they raised their souls to God whilst reflecting on His benefits, and, for some moments, they continued in silent meditation.

Suddenly, they perceived Leonardo running along, out of breath, and covered with perspiration; his appearance was wild and distracted. "Ah! my lady," cried he, while still at a distance, "what a misfortune! what dreadful news! The two men that I accompanied are not pilgrims but robbers,—murderers! They are going to assassinate Sir Theobald, his wife, his daughter, and all his people, —plunder the castle,—set fire to it!"——

Leonardo was so much exhausted that he could say no more; he fell breathless and insensible at the foot of a tree, and it was a considerable time before he came to himself.

Rosalind and Emma turned pale and trembled. "O my God!" said they, "the good knight!—the

excellent Othilia!—our dear Agnes!—Emma, my child, run quickly to the castle, run with all your might, collect all the domestics, order them to take horse, and speed in all haste to Falkenbourg to warn our friends; tell them to make all possible haste, even if the horses perish by it."

In a few minutes, Emma was at the gate of the castle, the frightened domestics assembled at her cries: Emma acquainted them with Leonardo's account and the pressing orders of her mother. They all shuddered with indignation against the robbers, and began to lament as if the danger menaced themselves personally.

Rosalind soon arrived with Leonardo, who had related to her some additional particulars. "What are you doing," said she, "lamenting instead of acting? Mount! make haste; and carry help to our benefactor!" "It is impossible, my lady," said the old squire of the brave Adalrich; "the two scoundrels are too much in advance; they are already near Falkenbourg, whilst we have many miles to go before we get there. Besides, it will soon be dark, and the road is spoiled by the rains: with the best horse in the world I could not arrive at Falkenbourg before day-break. Our old laboring horses are worth nothing for riding, and our war-horses have been sold since the death of our kind master; there 's not a horse to be found all round the country that could support such a journey."

Poor Rosalind wrung her hands in despair: she raised her eyes to heaven in profound sorrow, shedding abundant tears. "Oh, my God!" said she, "have pity upon those generous persons who had pity on me. Pray to God, my dear Emma, to confound the infamous intention of these highwaymen!" "Merciful God!" said Emma, with lively emotion, "succor them, as they have succored us!" All the people of the castle repeated the same prayer. "My dear friends!" said Rosalind, "whatever may be the difficulty of arriving at Falkenbourg before midnight, it must, nevertheless, be attempted. One word will suffice to preserve the life of Sir Theobald and his family; all will be done in an instant. If Leonardo happened not to be so fatigued, and almost ill from running, he would certainly have gone! But you, Martin," added she, addressing herself to a young man, "you have stout legs; do you undertake the journey; the pathway shortens the road more than one third. I will give you a hundred florins if you arrive at Falkenbourg in time." "It is impossible," replied the domestic; "who could find in the darkness of night the narrow path across the mountain, without falling over the precipices?" "Besides," said Leonardo, "the only bridge by which one could have crossed the torrent is thrown down; it would require wings to cross it now." There was a pause.—At last Emma sud-

denly exclaimed, her eyes sparkling with joy, "Wings! Wings! now a thought has struck me! Sir Theobald recommended me to confine my little love carefully at first, as, without that, she would certainly find the way to Falkenbourg, and return. Let us fasten a letter round its neck; it will doubtless carry it in safety to Falkenbourg." "God be praised!" cried her mother. "Our prayers will be heard! My dear Emma, it is your good angel that has inspired you with this ingenious idea; let us put it in execution."

Emma ran immediately and brought the dove. They fastened a little note to the red collar which it wore, and the youthful Emma, accompanied by her mother, the old squire, and all the people of the castle, carried it to the terrace, and set it at liberty. The dove ascended high in air, hovered for some time here and there, then, all at once, directed its flight towards that part of the country in which Falkenbourg was situated. The inhabitants of the castle were filled with joy, and all accompanied the dove with vows and prayers. Never was a ship laden with gold, when setting sail, accompanied by more sincere and hearty good wishes.

However, Rosalind and Emma continued in the greatest uneasiness. "Will the dove arrive at her destination?" said her mother. "If it chanced to fall into the talons of a bird of prey! if it should

not be able to support the length of the journey! if it should arrive too late! if they should not perceive it at Falkenbourg! if it should not be able to enter the castle! Great God! what misfortunes might not be the result!"

Rosalind and her daughter sat down near the window, watching the horizon with an attentive and uneasy eye, whilst they prayed fervently. They were in the greatest perplexity. Sleep did not visit their eyelids during the whole night. It was past midnight; a furious tempest howled through the forest-trees; the distant country in which Falkenbourg was situated was buried in profound obscurity, when, suddenly, Emma and her mother were terror-struck at the appearance of a bright light, they trembled with apprehension, and increased the fervor of their supplications. "Oh, my God!" said Emma, "see! the flames rise higher and higher! Look, how the tempest agitates it, and seems to make it move from side to side!" Both mother and daughter were near fainting at the sight; but soon, to their great joy, they perceived that they were mistaken. The supposed flame proved to be nothing but the moon, which, having at length risen above the vapors, soon shone with clearer brilliancy, and continued her slow and majestic way through the azure heavens. Rosalind and her little girl, reassured, remained some time

longer at the window, but did not remark the slightest trace of that fearful redness usually observed when a great fire takes place.

At last, the day broke, which they welcomed with joy and gratitude towards God, after having passed a night of the most dreadful suffering.

CHAPTER V.

A HAPPY ISSUE.

Although Rosalind and Emma were aware that the robbers had not succeeded in reducing Falkenbourg to ashes, they were still in a state of uncertainty as to the fate of the knight and his family. "Oh! how precious would intelligence from Falkenbourg be to me at this moment!" said Rosalind. "I would willingly give all my jewels to him who should bring it!" "And I," said Emma, "would add all my money besides!"

What had happened at Falkenbourg during the night was still unknown to them. The following is an account of what took place:—

The day before, at evening, Sir Theobald, Othilia, and Agnes, sat down gaily to table. The sun was nearly set, its last rays shone on the windows, and illuminated the ancient dining-hall, where the family had assembled. Two pilgrims were announced

The knight gave orders for their reception. "After supper," said he, "I will speak to them." The servant retired. Agnes anticipated, though in advance, the pleasure she should have in hearing the delightful stories of the travellers. They still sat at table, conversing together, when Agnes screamed out, with astonishment, "Oh! look, look! my dove!" And there, indeed, it was, with wings extended, pecking at the panes of glass as if demanding to be admitted. Agnes opened the window, and the pretty bird flew on her shoulder to caress her. "Look at the pretty red collar round its neck!" said her mother; "there is a folded paper fastened to it! I verily believe that it is a letter! How ingenious are the ideas of children!"

The knight closely examined the paper; it was addressed in the following words: "Read immediately." He opened it, cast his eyes on it, and instantly changed color. "Great God!" cried he, "what is this?" "What is the matter?" cried the mother and daughter, alarmed. The knight then read:

"Most noble lord, the two pilgrims who will reach your mansion this evening, are robbers, belonging to the gang which you lately vanquished. This very night they intend to assassinate you and all the inhabitants of Falkenbourg, to plunder the

castle, and then reduce it to ashes. Seven other villains, now in the neighborhood, await the signal agreed upon; three lighted candles placed in the window of the pilgrims' chamber will indicate to them the right moment for secretly entering the castle, to second the attempt. The two robbers intend opening the garden gate to them in the night, and thus admitting them. God grant that the dove may arrive in time, and that you may all be saved! To convey this intelligence by any other means I found impossible.

"Your grateful

"ROSALIND."

"What a miracle!" said Othilia, much moved. "The dove is a heavenly messenger, like that which in old times brought an olive-branch to Noah in the ark. Thanks be to God who has preserved us!"

Sir Theobald lost no time; he made his wife and daughter enter an adjoining room, put on his cuirass, gathered a few of his people about him, and then desired to have the two pilgrims conducted into his presence.

They entered the room in a humble and submissive manner, bowing respectfully. Lupo, who was spokesman, said to Sir Theobald, with affected politeness, and a mild and smiling aspect: "Gener-

ous knight, we come from Hohenbourg, and are laden with a thousand friendly salutations for you. We esteem ourselves fortunate in thus being able to cultivate the acquaintance of the illustrious man, whose heroism is acknowledged throughout the entire world, who is adored by the oppressed, the widow, and the orphan, and whom the pious Rosalind cannot sufficiently praise. How truly pious is that noble lady! She loaded us with unmerited honors. And her daughter, Emma, what a sweet angel! she melted into tears when we recited the history of our pilgrimage to her. She particularly requested us to tell you the dove was well."

Sir Theobald, while he listened to flatteries which disgusted him, became more and more indignant; however, he still contained himself, and, gravely addressing these wretches, "Who are you?" said he. "Poor pilgrims," replied Lupo; "we come from the Holy Land; and are returning to Thuringia, our country." "What is your name?" said the knight. "My name is Herrmann," said Lupo, "and my young cousin here is called Burckhardt." "What is your business at this castle?" "We ask a lodging for the night," said they both; "tomorrow, by cock-crow, we shall depart. How delighted our friends will be to see us again!" "What!" cried the knight, with a voice of thunder; "your name is Lupo; and yours, young rogue, is

Orso. You neither come from the Holy Land, nor are you pilgrims, as you pretend; but highwaymen and incendiaries. You do not come here to ask a night's lodging, but to assassinate us, and burn the castle to the ground. You must now receive the just recompense of your crimes. Here, guards! Strip these highwaymen of their false clothing, and let us see them in their true colors! Disarm and put them in the dungeons of the tower."

The guards soon stripped them of their pilgrims' gowns, when they appeared armed with poniards. In his indignation, Sir Theobald reproached them severely for the detestable hypocrisy with which they had attempted to deceive under the mask of piety. He then gave orders to have them secured in the vaults of the castle.

When they were there, the youngest said to Lupo: "How is it possible that the knight is so well acquainted with our plans, even in their minutest details? The boy that accompanied us,—could he have understood our language and betrayed us?" 'It is impossible," said Lupo, "unless he got in by the window. I paid the greatest attention, and watched the gate of the castle incessantly; not a soul has passed the draw-bridge since our arrival. There is something very extraordinary about it. Could the knight have made a league with the devil?" Upon this the old wretch fell into a dread-

ful passion, and heaped all kinds of imprecations on Sir Theobald. "The monster!" he cried, foaming with rage, "he is the only cause of all our misfortune!" Hardened and corrupted, the infamous Lupo could not conceive that his misfortunes were caused by his crimes. Orso, his comrade, on the contrary, began to weep and lament, and to reproach him. "Ah!" said he, "if I had not listened to your perfidious insinuations! You promised me a life of pleasure in the midst of honors and abundance, and now I see nothing before me but a terrible death. You said that we should do no harm, and that God would not punish crime either in this world or the next. But there is an inward voice which always spoke to me, and announced to me the approaching punishment of my crimes. Why have I not hearkened to that voice! Of all the treasures that I have amassed by murder and rapine, nothing remains to me to-day. If I had lived honestly, and worked hard, but with a good conscience, how much happier I should be! Now the hand of God has seized me. It is He who discovers and punishes the guilty, even though they hide from Him; I have no longer any hope in this world! And can I even hope that God will pardon me in the next?"

Whilst the robbers bewailed their fate, Sir Theobald took measures for securing their accomplices.

At the appointed hour, he had three lights placed in the window of the room destined to the reception of pilgrims and strangers. The porter, a man of tried prudence, went with seven other men to the court-yard, to watch the little gate, and await the arrival of the other robbers. For a long time they waited in vain: midnight had already passed; the moon rose, and her light shone on the battlements of the tower. The servants became impatient; all their trouble would be in vain if the robbers chanced to recognize them. "A good idea has just struck me," said the porter; "I will go and disguise myself in the clothes of those who have already fallen into our hands." He went in for a moment and soon returned, dressed like a pilgrim, and wearing the hat ornamented with cockle-shells.

"With this dress," said he, "they will take me for one of themselves; place yourselves behind this column, and let us wait." At last they heard a knocking at the little gate; the porter opened it gently. One of the brigands advanced and said, in a low tone, "Are we in time?"—"Yes," answered the porter, in a whisper; "be quiet and enter." The whole seven then slipped, one after the other, into the court-yard. They were all armed with poniards, and were provided with sulphur and torches, to set the castle on fire. When the last had passed through, the porter fastened the gate

and gave the signal to those who were concealed behind the column, who threw themselves on the stupified gang. Sir Theobald then came in, accompanied by armed men, carrying torches. The robbers were almost terrified to death; they had not even time to draw their swords; they were put in irons and placed in a dungeon. He then hastened to join his wife and child, who awaited him with anxiety.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REJOICING.

Rosalind and Emma, on their part, waited with impatience, mixed with much uneasiness, to receive intelligence from Falkenbourg. More than ten times did Emma ascend the tower stairs, to see if the messenger was coming. It was past noon; the agony of both mother and daughter increased, and each hour appeared so long to them, that they began to think it would never end. Towards evening, as Emma was still looking from the top of the tower, she perceived, in the distance, on the road, a carriage escorted by several horsemen. Transported with joy, she hastily descended to seek her mother, crying out: "There they come themselves! I am sure it is; let us go and meet them!"

Sir Theobald, Othilia, and Agnes, had indeed set out on their journey to Hohenbourg by day-break, anxious to be themselves the bearers of the happy news of their deliverance. As soon as the knight perceived Rosalind and Emma, he dismounted. Othilia and Agnes also alighted, and all came forward and saluted their benefactresses, thanking them with a cordiality and an emotion which it is impossible to express. They were transported with joy, mutually asking each other a thousand questions, and relating a thousand things, as they walked up the hill which conducted to the castle.

The evening was celebrated by a feast. Leonardo waited at table, and was obliged to repeat all that the robbers had said to him. He particularly related how the youngest of the two had interceded for him, at the brink of the abyss, and how he had prevented his companion from throwing him into the torrent. "I would willingly, in turn, intercede for the unfortunate man," said the kind Leonardo. "As he showed feelings of humanity, he deserves to be less severely treated."

When supper was over, Sir Theobald said, "It is to the ingenious device of Emma that we owe our life," said he, in grateful accents. "Oh, no!" replied the modest Emma, blushing, "it is to the compassion of Agnes for the poor little dove, and to her kindness in having given it to me." "Let us

bless God!" said Rosalind, "who has bestowed on us such children! But take care, my loves," continued she, "take care that you do not become proud of the prominent part which you have had in the late events. Consider poor Leonardo; full of gratitude for his benefactor, how much more he has done than even you." "True, indeed," said Sir Theobald. "Here, my brave fellow, give me your hand! One of these days you will become a noble squire, for your faithful heart renders you worthy of it." "And the good Sir Adalrich," said Othilia, "do we not owe him a tear of gratitude? If he had not, through pity, taken care of poor Leonardo, where should we be now?" "But you are forgetting Sir Theobald," returned Rosalind; "he who so generously defended a desolate widow, an unhappy orphan! His good action could not remain unrewarded. So it is with Othilia and Agnes, who have given us such abundant proofs of friendship. God be blessed! His providence has turned all to our good."

Shortly after, Agnes went out, and soon returned with the dove, which she had brought from Falkenbourg, without having mentioned it to her friend. She then presented the pretty bird to Emma, (who held in its beak a golden olive-branch,) and placed it on her shoulder. "My dear child," said Othilia, "accept this olive-branch as a testimony of our

gratitude, and in remembrance of our happy deliverance. It was a gift of my good and pious mother. She made me commit to memory many hymns and psalms; and, one day that she was pleased with my zeal, she rewarded me with this little present. I have never since forgotten the words which I then repeated to her. These words, which I have here, are this day realized in our history." Othilia and Agnes then sung the following verses:—

"Who makes on high His sure abode
In secret with our God;
Beneath Thy shadow, Lord of Light,
Dwells fearless all the night.
I said unto the Lord of old:
'My hope, and my stronghold!
My God, on Him my soul would lean
In purest faith serene.'
For He shall free thee from the net
The wily hunter set."

They were all much affected, and every eye was filled with tears; whilst the spirit of the sacred hymn filled their souls with sweet and pious reflections.

INGRATITUDE.

Mrs. Grayfeld lay at the point of death; her daughter Helen stood by her bedside weeping bitterly. "Do not weep, my daughter," said the dying mother; "God will not forsake you: put your trust in Him. Continue to be good and virtuous, and you will not be left destitute."

"My dear, my kind mother," said Helen sobbing, "when you are no more, I shall be a poor orphan. Alas! what will become of me without father or mother? With whom shall I take refuge? Who will take pity on me?"

At that moment Mrs. Everhold entered the room. She was a woman who, though poor, was honest and laborious; she had at all times shown great friendship for Helen's mother, and had sincerely sympathized with her sufferings.

"Dear friend," said Mrs. Grayfeld to her, "I do not regret this world, where I have so long been a sufferer; there is but one thing that renders death painful to me." Saying this, she cast a look of deep sorrow on her daughter, and said, "Assist her, I entreat you, with your counsel, and protect her when I am no more."

Mrs. Everhold wept; she took the hand of

the sufferer, and the emotion with which she pressed it assured the dying woman that her wish would be accomplished.

A few hours later Mrs. Grayfeld had ceased to live. Helen lay sobbing on her mother's body, and it was long before quiet and consolation returned to her sad heart.

Mrs. Everhold, a woman of strict probity, like a kind and generous friend, took the poor orphan to live with her. Helen found in her a second mother, who provided for all her necessities, and instructed her in needlework and other domestic employments.

Mrs. Everhold lived by the labor of her hands; she worked with her needle, and embroidered beautifully. The surrounding gentry gave her so many orders, that she was sometimes obliged to devote a portion of the night to them. Meanwhile her labor was not always duly appreciated: she was ill-paid, and was obliged to observe the strictest economy in order to gain her livelihood. She was indefatigable in her efforts to teach Helen sewing and embroidery, believing that she could not do better than teach her what would one day prove a means of subsistence.

For a whole year Helen showed much docility, and repaid the love of her benefactress with fond affection, with gentleness and gratitude; when a sudden change took place in her conduct. She frequented the society of giddy young girls; and it was not without

reason that Mrs. Everhold laid to their charge this change in her behavior.

Helen now became self-willed, and frequently performed her tasks with ill-humor. She considered it unjust that her benefactress should impose so much work on her, and allow her so little amusement. It was indeed true that Helen enjoyed but few of the pleasures of youth; but in this Mrs. Everhold acted prudently; she was acquainted with the dangers and temptations of the world, and knowing that the time might come when Helen would not be able to mix in such pleasures, she thought it wise not to encourage her to contract habits which, at a later period, she might be obliged to give up. She also knew by experience that nothing is so conducive to health, peace of mind, innocence of heart, and contentment, as constant occupation.

Hence the desire of this worthy woman to habituate her adopted daughter, whom she considered as a precious legacy bequeathed by her deceased friend, to industrious habits, and to the absence of such pleasures and amusements. But Helen put a different construction on her conduct.

Mrs. Everhold's manner of living was plain and frugal: her table was served with the greatest simplicity; and in her dress she avoided everything that could attract the slightest notice. Helen would have done well in con-

forming to a simplicity which, at a future period, would have conduced to her happiness; but she acted very differently. She complained of her food and clothing; and conceiving herself in all respects deserving of better treatment, she considered it most unjust that Mrs. Everhold should act thus, and yet receive all the proceeds of her labors. She entirely forgot that that worthy woman acted towards her as a mother, that she maintained her, and that it was from her instruction she had acquired all she knew.

Helen became ungrateful to her kind friend; and the young girls she met from time to time encouraged her in her improper conduct.

"You might easily maintain yourself," said they to her; "and then you would also have more liberty. The conduct of that woman towards you is shameful; she works you to death—the whole profit is hers; and you must put up with bad clothes and wretched food."

Such observations made a deep impression on Helen. Nothing appeared clearer to her than Mrs. Everhold's injustice. She forgot all she owed her benefactress, and never reflected that, but for this excellent woman, she would have been alone in the world, and utterly helpless.

With deep sorrow the good woman marked this alteration in Helen's manner. Her duties were performed with ill-humor; and she received with an ill grace the admonitions which her conduct called forth; and from some words

which she allowed to escape her, her benefactress perceived that she desired to leave her house.

If Mrs. Everhold had followed her first impulse, she would not have hesitated to send the ungrateful Helen from under her roof; for nothing more cruelly wounds a sensitive heart than ingratitude. But her dying friend was constantly before her eyes, and she still heard her last words. Her heart was also tortured with the idea, that should Helen be thrown so young on the world, without a guide, her ruin would be the result. These considerations calmed her feelings, and made her submit to much annoyance.

Another year passed away, and Helen's ingratitude became daily more apparent, as well as more painful to the heart of Mrs. Everhold. "I had hoped," said she to herself, "to find in this young person a grateful daughter, and a support in my old age; how much have I been mistaken!"

About this time there was a famine in the country; and Mrs. Everhold was obliged to resort to the strictest economy to keep beyond the reach of want. Fortunately she had plenty of orders for work; but she labored so much that her health suffered in consequence, and such employments as required much application were necessarily neglected. She had hoped that Helen would have offered to help her; but in this she was disappointed.

Helen had received from a baroness, who resided in the country, an offer to enter her service as lady's maid, which offer she did not hesitate to accept. Forgetting all she owed her benefactress, it never occurred to her that at this very moment the latter stood more than ever in need of her services, and that she ought not to abandon her; she took nothing of this into account, but engaged herself with the baroness, and then for the first time apprized the invalid of what she had done.

Mrs. Everhold was consequently much perplexed. "What are you going to do, Helen?" said she to her; "recollect that I am ill, that you are more necessary to me than ever, and that in my unfortunate situation you are all my hope and support."

But Helen was inflexible; she answered that she had promised, and would not break her word to the baroness.

Mrs. Everhold felt deeply the ill-conduct of her adopted daughter. "Oh, Helen," added she, "how ill you have rewarded my kind intentions!"

A few days after this, Helen quitted the house of her benefactress. What this worthy woman had feared, soon occurred; she found herself in great distress, her indispositions became more frequent; she worked but little; and the natural result was, that she was almost destitute of the necessaries of life. She possessed a few acres of land, which she in-

herited from her parents; these she sold. The money which she acquired by the sale, placed her for a year beyond the reach of want; but at the end of that time the sum was nearly exhausted, and her prospects for the future became mournful in the extreme. She had but little work to do, winter had set in, and the scarcity was increasing.

Helen had come with her mistress and family to spend the winter in the same town in which her benefactress resided. Mrs. Everhold now hoped to see her sometimes; but she was mistaken in her expectation; days, weeks, passed away, but she never called to see her.

This shameful and unworthy conduct made a most painful impression on the kind-hearted woman, and her eyes filled with tears. "Ah," she said sorrowfully, "how unhappy that poor creature will be!"

Mrs. Everhold was thus frequently annoyed. She often met Helen accidentally, who never failed to treat her with the same indifference. Once only she addressed her, and asked her how she was, but when Mrs. Everhold attempted to explain her unhappy situation to her, Helen hastily interrupted her, saying that every one was suffering at this moment; and turning abruptly from her, passed on.

God, in His goodness, sent to Mrs. Everhold's aid a worthy family, who showed her the greatest kindness, and provided her with every

necessary. Her heart was sensibly touched with this goodness; and raising her eyes filled with tears towards heaven, exclaimed, "O my God, I render thanks to Thee for having sent me such benefactors! They are under no obligation to me, and yet they have felt compassion for my wants."

Many persons were acquainted with Helen's wicked conduct, and blamed her severely: she was treated with contempt; for ingratitude is always despicable in the eyes of the just and good.

For some years Helen prospered, and appeared happy; she felt neither care nor sorrow. But at length her good fortune began to wane; the baroness, her mistress, having dissipated the greater part of her husband's fortune by a life of extravagance, was obliged to diminish her household expenses; she dismissed several of her domestics, and Helen among the rest. She would have found herself sadly embarrassed, had not the baron's gamekeeper made her his wife. She now looked forward to a life of happiness; but in this she was deceived: her husband resembled the master he served; he led a life of drunkenness and dissipation; and the little money Helen had succeeded in saving was soon exhausted. She worked day and night to keep herself from want, notwithstanding which her husband upbraided her with not doing enough; when he was intox-

icated he ill-used her, and was more than once near killing her.

Helen was wretched and unhappy; and at last determined to stay no longer in the power of a man who so cruelly ill-treated her: she therefore collected together the few things she possessed, with the intention of leaving her home, when she received intelligence that her husband had been thrown from his horse while out hunting, and was mortally wounded. Soon after, he was carried home to her, in an insensible state, and expired the same day.

Overwhelmed with the weight of her misfortunes, Helen knew not where to seek a refuge. The first person who presented herself to her imagination was Mrs. Everhold; but her heart was seized with fear when she reflected on her unworthy conduct towards that excellent woman. She, however, took courage and resolved to call on her, depending on the kind heart of her benefactress.

What was the astonishment of Mrs. Everhold, when one day Helen entered her room, weeping. She sobbed aloud! "Noble woman, my benefactress, my mother!" she exclaimed, "can you pardon me? I feel how ill I have acted towards you; I will repair all the wrong I have done, I will labor for you, I will take care of you, I will be grateful; can you receive me as your daughter; for alas, I am indeed unhappy!"

Mrs. Everhold was deeply agitated; she no

longer thought of Helen's cruel behavior, but listened to the recital of her misfortunes.

"You shall remain with me," said she to her; "I will still consider you as my daughter." These words were healing balm to Helen: she fell on the bosom of Mrs. Everhold, and relieved her oppressed heart by a flood of tears.

The same day Helen went to the churchyard and sought her mother's grave, which she strewed with flowers, and, throwing herself on her knees, exclaimed in a tone of deep contrition: "O my mother, let your spirit descend on your erring daughter! Heretofore she has not fulfilled your wishes, or followed your example; but now, upon this sacred spot, she makes to you a solemn vow of amendment."

Helen left the churchyard much consoled, and returned to Mrs. Everhold. She kept her vow; she worked without relaxation, and was ever afterwards governed by a strictly religious principle.

From that period her life flowed sweetly on, Helen was the object of her tenderest love, and they mutually lightened the burden of life. This change had a most salutary effect on Mrs. Everhold's health; she recovered new strength, and lived many years. When she died Helen wept for her as a daughter for her mother; she regretted her most sincerely, and often went to her grave, which she watered with tears of fond affection and unfeigned gratitude.

THE GOOD SON.

BY REV. E. MANGIN.

Some years ago, in a small town, or rather village, in England, there lived a clergyman, who had the care of a parish in the neighborhood. He was married to a very gentle and amiable young lady, and had a son, who, at the time when this history begins, was about five years old. They lived in a neat and pretty small house, which they called Primrose Cottage, because it was originally of the color of a primrose; though afterwards it was hardly possible to know the color of the building, as it was nearly covered with ivy and honeysuckle. Here they lived, poor, but contented and happy, because they were both good, and greatly beloved. The wife was loved, because she used to help the sick and needy with physic and cheap food; and now and then by giving a piece of flannel or linen



PRIMROSE COTTAGE.

to such as wanted clothes in the winter time for themselves or their little ones; and by her way of doing all this, and a civil manner of speaking to the people, she won their hearts still more. The clergyman, on his side, gained general respect and good-will by doing all his duties, public and private, with perfect regularity, and as if he took true pleasure in these, and in nothing else. He was a real priest of the Church of England, and used no new forms or fashions in praying or preaching; with the sorrowful and the dying among his flock, he was sad and solemn; and, when he could not console them otherwise, would show that he at least felt for their misfortunes: But with the young, the gay, and the happy, he seemed happy and gay himself, and encouraged them in their sports and games; and when they played cricket or football, or danced, he would look on delighted, as he sat in his green arm-chair on the little grassplat before his own door; while his wife worked at her needle, seated near him; and their healthy, cheerful boy played in their sight.

These were their joyful times; both were young: and, if they had not fortune, they had

hope to enliven them; and when they had an hour to spare from their different duties, they passed that hour in laying plans for the happiness of their dear child.

One day, however, the clergyman, on coming home after the church service was over, was silent and pale; he went to bed early; the next morning, he could not rise; and in four days more, he was dead.

And now woe came where joy had been, and weeping instead of smiles; and where all before had been hope, there was now nothing but despair. A new clergyman arrived to fill the place of the last; and the poor, forlorn, and friendless mother was obliged to lead her innocent boy by the hand, from what was no longer their own door, and to bid farewell forever to the Primrose Cottage.

Nothing can well be imagined more miserable than the unhappy widow. In losing her husband, she had lost her protector and her beloved companion—all her power of doing good to others—and almost all her means of supporting herself, and one she loved more than herself, her little son.

She had no friends, except among the poor,

who can be of no use to such as are poor like themselves; and she had scarcely any money to hire a lodging, or buy a meal to eat. But something she must do; and therefore she went to the house of a humble farmer, a good man, who had known her in better times, and he readily agreed to give her shelter in a small room that looked out on an orchard at the back of his house, in which there was a bed for herself, and, in a little closet behind it, a crib for her boy.

It was also settled that they should share the plain food which the farmer and his wife were contented to eat; and, by way of paying for these comforts, the poor lady undertook to do as much for them as she was able to perform. By degrees, she made herself useful; and she was so gentle, and so sweet-tempered, and had so little pride, that at last they perceived they could not live happily without her.

Any spare time she had, she employed in teaching her boy to read and write; and when, at night, he was in bed and asleep, and she thought no one observed her, she would, many a time, sit down and weep; then pray to God

for pity, and at length go to sleep herself. In this manner, and walking with her boy in the orchard, and conversing with the farmer and his dame, and seldom being heard of, or spoken to, by anybody else, some years passed over.

Her son was not only the chief object of her affection, but her constant companion; and so fond was he of his mother, and so grateful to her, (the proof of his having a noble mind,) that he would hardly ever leave her; and while he was seated by her side, as children must do something, he used to amuse himself with cutting little bits of wood into different shapes, or moulding a lump of beeswax, which the farmer had given him, into the resemblance, as he thought, of birds, cows, &c. He at last finished the likeness of a goat in wax, so much to the satisfaction of his friends, that the farmer grew proud of showing the little figure to gentlemen and others passing by.

One day, a thin old man, dressed in very poor clothes, stopped for many minutes to look at the *goat*, as it stood in the parlor window; and presently coming in, asked very humbly to be allowed to examine the waxen figure

the farmer was pleased with this, and said, "Sit down, old man, and look at it as long as you like; and take a glass of strong beer to refresh you." The old stranger, sitting down, refused the beer, with many thanks; but desired the farmer to tell him, if possible, who made the goat. The farmer said he would soon do that; and, calling the boy from his mother's little room, introduced him to the old man, who made many inquiries about him, as, who he was; how old; and who was his teacher? The boy answered, that he lived with his mother, at the house of the good farmer where they then were; that he was nine years of age, and had learned to read and write from his mother; but had not been taught to carve or mould by any one.

The stranger then asked, with great humility, to see his mother, who immediately came out to him, and repeated the information the boy had already given him. The old man said he seemed a good child, and rather ingenious; that he himself had once, in his better days, a turn for carving sticks and stones, and liked anything of the kind; that he knew a stone mason in the next village, who would

he thought, give the poor boy something to do in his way, if his mother had no objection; and that, with her leave, he would speak of him to the mason, on his road home.

The boy, who seldom smiled, smiled now at the notion of having something large to carve: the mother was thankful to the old stranger; only she was rather sad at the thought of her boy being absent from her for some hours every day, as he must be if employed; but the good-hearted farmer and his wife advised her not to refuse the offer, if the mason would agree to the old man's plan; and so he went away.

In a few days after this visit from the poor old stranger, the boy's mother received a letter, signed N., but nothing more, telling her, that if her son would go along with the messenger who left the letter, he would take him to the mason they had spoken of together; and as the distance was but about half a mile, the exercise of walking would do him good. A decent-looking countryman waited for him; the mother sighed, but let him go; the boy went, half joyful, half melancholy; and the farmer, who greatly liked the child, would go

with him, and promised to bring him back on his return from market.

For several months, this obedient child continued to attend his master, the mason, and was always regular in returning to his mother at the end of three or four hours each day. To her, the first sound of his foot and sight of his face were always welcome; he was as respectful and tender towards her as ever; and in fact, in nothing was he changed, except in what is now to be mentioned. He said he was exceedingly fond of the work he had to do, and that his master praised him; but still he made a sort of secret of what he was doing while away. He was a boy of an uncommon character, and had the serious face, and the sensible words in talking, of boys three years older than himself; insomuch, that his observing mother felt a sort of respect for him, and allowed him to keep his secret as long as he chose.

Some more time had passed in this manner, when, towards the sunset of a fine summer's day, as the melancholy widow was sitting outside of the cottage door, now and then talking to her son, and often looking up at the streaks

of crimson and gold which adorned the sky, the farmer came home much later than he usually did, and said he had a letter for mistress, which he was desired to give into her own hands. The widow took the letter into her apartment; but presently afterwards rather ran than walked out again, giving the letter to the farmer and his wife to read; while she herself, shedding many tears, threw her arms round her boy's neck, and kissed his cheeks, crying out, "My dear, my excellent child!"

The farmer, having read the letter, seemed as much astonished and rejoiced as she herself was. And it was no wonder that those who loved the boy, and wished him well, should be pleased with the news in the letter! It was, as before, signed N., and informed the delighted mother that her son had made a model in clay for a statue, and sent his performance to him in London; that he had shown it to several great judges of the art; and that they, as a reward, had sent the mother, for the use of her clever boy, the sum of *fifty* pounds.

This was indeed a sum much larger than

she had been mistress of for many a long day, and at once gave her independency.

Her generous, and now proud and happy boy, put a bank-note for the money into his mother's hand, and was going to speak, but could not; some tears fell from his eyes on his mother's cheek as she embraced him; and both went—as the mother said—to walk together in the orchard; but perhaps it was to sit down and weep for joy.

They could now afford, in some measure, to reward the kind farmer and his wife for their former friendly behavior, by making them a handsome present; and accordingly the widow bought a fine, but not too fine a gown for the wife, and a most beautiful young spotted cow for her husband.

But wonders, instead of ending with what had just happened, were only beginning. In a year or two after, the ingenious youth, who was more and more pleased with his employment, made a statue of white marble, and wrote to his friend N. to tell him what he had done, and to say he was ashamed to show his work to any one except to him; but greatly wished that he could see it.

In about a fortnight from this, as he was returning to the cottage after finishing his work for the day, and had just reached the door, he heard the noise of carriage wheels, and scarcely had he entered, and while he was yet holding his mother's hand in his, a chariot drove up and stopped; a servant in rich livery opened the carriage door, and, to the utter amazement of the boy, his mother, the farmer and his wife, out of the carriage came poor old N., (for they knew him by no other name,) dressed much as before; and, as before, civil and humble in his look and way of speaking. He shook hands with them all round; and, seating himself, said, "This time I will take a glass of your beer, farmer; I have rather a long story to tell; that is, a long one for me, as I am not fond of using many words." And then, having drunk his beer, and had a little bread and cheese, he proceeded, addressing himself, with great respect, chiefly to the boy's mother. "As you have been in London, madam, you may have seen such and such marble statues," which he mentioned. She said she well remembered them, and how beauteous they were. "Well,

madam," said he, "they were made by me; as were some others, which you may not have seen: I have obtained a little fame, a good deal of money, and some share of credit among persons of consequence in town, who are pleased to say that I understand my art; and they generally show favor to any one whom I recommend. I formerly suspected that your son had genius; a gift few have: I have long been satisfied that he had great talents; and, unknown to him, have examined a piece of sculpture he has just finished, and shown it to better judges than myself." Then turning towards the young man, he added, "And I now have the pleasure to present you with the price which the king himself has commanded me to pay you for the beautiful statue you have made, and which I shall take with me to London to be placed in the royal palace. The money, my young friend, is one thousand guineas; a large sum, but not too much for the work of genius you have produced, nor for the wise and generous use I know you will make of it."

The rest of the youth's story is easily told. he soon made a great fortune, and gained such

renc wn, that a statue by him reflected honor on his country. He rendered his beloved mother as happy as her son's virtuous name, and the wealth he shared with her, could make her; enriched the good farmer and his wife to their heart's content; and never, for a day, forgot his debt of love and gratitude to the OLD STRANGER.



Carrier Pigeon.